

This is BILK Nr. 78 for July 1997. BILK is published bi-monthly by Ulrich Magin, Augustastr. 85, 76437 Kastatt, Germany. Subscription is 15 DM for Europe and 20 DM for the rest of the world. Send bank notes, not cheques.

BEHEMOTH

- Loch Ness: * Photo of Nessie by Lorna Taylor from September 1995, reprinted in Fortean Times May 1996, identified as wave shadow by Rip Hepple. * On August 11, 1996, Austin Hepburn photographed something he believed to be Nessie between Foyers and Dores. Identified as boat wake by Rip Hepple. * In September 1996, Joseph Mclean and his brother Alastair saw a "gigantic black snake some 20 ft long". They also briefly spotted a flipper. Rip Hepple and Murray Barber, a former LNI-member, think it was probably a boat wake. (This all from Nessletter 128, January 1997) * Photo by Moray holiday party taken on June 10, 1994, rediscovered by Andreas Trottmann * 16. February 1997, Dave Shields and family see object in loch "like a jet-ski". * Val Smith saw, sometime in 1996, from the Clansman Hotel "a round object, of a russet colour. It was about half a mile away and about four feet across." Comments from researchers - Adrian Shine: "probably a bird"; Rip Hepple: "I cannot say what was seen". Usually, you can trust Rip's judgement. All the above is from Rip Hepple's Nessletter 129, April 97, which you should subscribe to if you do not already.
- Dinosaurs: In Fortean Times 99, p. 47, Ian Simmons briefly refers to a sighting in the southern states of the US of a "large lizard loping across the road, (it) appeared to be ridden by a tiny human being". In another recently published book, Tom Donogh & Linda Bradshaw's "Merging Dimensions" (Mysteries of Sedona: Sedona, AZ 1997), the authors relate numerous mysterious experiences, among them UFO abductions, Bigfoot footprints, Men-In-Black, dinosaurs and humanoids. Their photos show little else than lens reflections and raindrops photographed with a flashlight.
- Amazon mystery beast: Fortean Times 99, p. 24, has one of the most interesting cryptozoological articles I have seen for years. In August 1993, Jeremy Wade observed a strange pink animal with a mysterious serrated dorsal fin, looking very dinosaur-like, in the Amazon. He met witnesses who had similar stories to tell. He returned the following year, this time he was able to take a photo. He returned again the next year, and, even though he did not see the creature, managed to take a film of it. Most likely, it is a dolphin with a wounded dorsal fin. Now, just remember that the Amazon is slightly larger than Loch Ness, with fewer tourist looking for humps as well. Think that a single person goes to the Amazon and sees the creature in three successive years. He is able to document his sightings on two occasions. This shows that once you've located the lair of a strange creature, you will find it quickly. Compare it to 50 years of efforts at Loch Ness, or to the Bigfoot search in California, or to the Lake Champlain hunt, or any cryptozoological quest (remember they even found the coelacanth in no time - in the Indian Ocean, which is slightly larger than any monster lake). In Fortean Times 100, Karl Shuker lists "the successes of cryptozoology". None of these creatures had been searched for, most were discovered without anybody expecting to find them, such as the tube worms on the ocean floor or the megamouth shark. One is no discovery, but pure invention: the tedious onza (onza is the Spanish word for puma - you would not be able to translate any cryptozoological article on the onza into Spanish - wouldn't make sense). Not a single cryptozoological discovery listed by Shuker had anything to do with cryptozoology, they are simply new animal discoveries. Cryptozoologist should stop comparing a species of deer that unexpectedly turns up in a previously unexplored remote valley in Vietnam with Bigfoot, Nessie and sea serpents, all of which have not been found despite better equipped enormous searches.

- Bibliography: * When an earthquake hit Iran in May 1997, a villager from Chorassan told reporters: "The mountain roared like a dragon". (Süddeutsche Zeitung 12 May 1997, p. 10) * Peter Hyams' new movie "The Relic" stars a dino-saur-like survivor in a museum. (Süddeutsche Zeitung 30 April 97, p. 16) * Johannes von Buttlar: Adams Planet (Munich: Herbig 1991), das (p. 173) nonsense information on Paluxy, and (p. 165-178) the allegedly ancient lca stones * Irish master otter (Fortean Times 100, p. 17) * Loch Morar monster's wake spotted by Tom Healy, who also took photos, and he also photographed an "unidentified animal in Lough Bron, Co. Kerry" (Fortean Times 100, p. 30) * "Half-fish, half-horse" river monster in Transkei. It has allegedly killed nine people since January 1997 (Fortean Times 100, p. 7) * Russian lake monster in Lake Brosno, near Tver (Fortean Times 100, p. 6) * Giant turtle in pond in Hanoi is not legend but fact (Fortean Times 100, p. 6) * A 60 ft giant lizard was seen in Madison Square Park in New York - Roland Emmerich was shooting his remake of Godzilla in May 1997. (Evening Standard 19 May 1997, p. 23)

ISIS

- Bipedia Nr. 14, March 1997, has been published (32, Avenue de Buenos-Ayres, 06000 Nice, France). This issue contains no marine humanoid speculation, but a sorry tendency for ancient astronaut ideas. How you prove one contentious theory by referring to others without scientific recognition, like cryptozoology, Velikovsky, Atlantis and Z. Sitchin has always eluded me. Still, read it.
- Bibliography: dolphin-like aliens (Fortean Times 100, p. 43)

LEVIATHAN

- Bibliography: * Richard Ellis book on sea monsters has now been published in a German edition, "Seeungeheuer - Mythen, Fabeln und Fakten", Birkhäuser 1997. Review in "Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung", 24 April 97, p. 11 * Alleged "Plesiosaur" fished in 1977 off New Zealand: Fortean Times 99, p. 52

KRAKEN

- Bibliography: * Giant squid hunt off New Zealand: Fortean Times 99, p. 52 * "Beast", the Peter Benchley-authored horror movie about a horrible architeuthis, was shown on German TV channel RTL in April. (Süddeutsche Zeitung 30 April 97, p. 19)

CRYPTOZOLOGY

- Bibliography: * Geo, May 1997, had a long article on cryptozoology, covering the usual ground and definitely "pro". * On 25 May 97, German TV channel ZDF broadcast a documentary "Rätselhafte Ungeheuer" on monsters, supported by Richard Greenwell and Bernard Heuvelmans. Most interesting were several new films, including a new yeti film (German origin?) and several Bigfoot movies. The material on Nessie included St Columba and an interview with Adrian Shine. * A new species of lizard was discovered by Wuppertal reptile expert Prof. Hans Hermann Schleich in Nepal. It resembles the gecko, is yellow-brown in colour and has a blue ring around the eyes and yellow scales on the eyelids. Schleich found the creature in a remote valley in Nepal where no expedition had ever gone before. (Bild, 15 April 97, p. 1) * A tiny species of frog was discovered on Monte Iberia, east Cuba, by Alberto Estrada and Blair Hedges (Penn State University). Each year, one hundred new species of amphibium are discovered, and 25 new mammals. (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 12 February 1997, p. N2)

MARINE LIFE

- Sharks: At Spanish Keys, Bahamas, 54-year-old Wilbor Wood was attacked by a shark after he'd speared a fish. The shark severely mauled Wood's arm. (Süddeutsche Zeitung 30 May 97, p. 12) The fish did little else to Wood than Wood had done to a fish.